

Wisconsin County Forests Association

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Executive Director

October 26, 2021

Representative VanderMeer
Chair, Committee on Rural Development
Room 11 West
State Capitol, PO Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

RE: Support for AB 640

Dear Representative VanderMeer,

The Wisconsin County Forests Association (WCFA) is writing in support of AB 640, relating to the threshold amount of timber sold from State, County and Community forests.

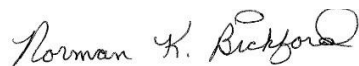
WCFA represents the 30 counties in Wisconsin with County Forest lands established under state statutes §28.10 and 28.11. Collectively, these 30 counties manage over 2.4 million acres of forests, the largest public ownership in our State. These counties are a major contributor to public land management and rural economic development, and are also highly valued because they provide a reliable source of raw materials for the forest products industry, as well as a tremendous amount of recreation opportunities.

During these uncertain and challenging times of wood markets, especially since the loss of the Verso paper mills in Wisconsin Rapids and Duluth, it's critical to our success to be flexible and capitalize on opportunities to sell timber readily. Now more than ever, increasing the direct sale threshold would be extremely helpful in ensuring continued management of our State's vast and valuable forests.

When the direct sale threshold was last revised in 1999, the average sale value on our public lands was \$18,118. The direct sale limit of \$3,000 was 16.6% of that figure. In 2020, the average sale value on State and County lands rose to over \$63,000, ranging from \$48,000 to \$82,000. A proposed increase of the direct sale limit to \$10,000 would be 15.8% of the current average sale value.

We appreciate the support from the Council on Forestry, Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association, the Wisconsin Counties Association and other industry allies of this increase.

We would greatly appreciate and thank you for your support on this legislation as well.
Kind regards,



Norman Bickford
President



Rebekah Luedtke
Executive Director

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